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Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 34 | Min 22 | Humidity 71% Generally cloudy sky Sensex 57,197 | Nifty 17,171 | Gold 53,780 | Silver 73,000 | Dollar 76.48 | Euro 82.51 | GBP 98.42

Meshes to protect saplings on sidewalks need upkeep as most turning into garbage dumps and trees outgrowing guards

TREE RADICALS

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A group of citizens in the city has taken it upon themselves to ensure the upkeep and healthy growth of plants and trees along the sidewalks and medians of Bengaluru's roads. They are doing so by clearing the base of tree guards of garbage and debris, and by calling for an end to the 'plant it and forget it' practice.

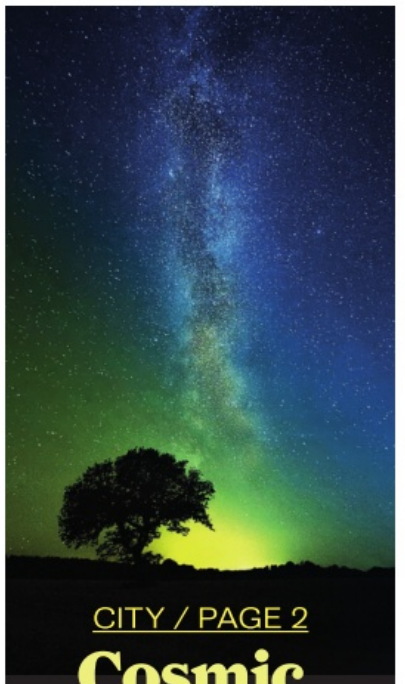
Several tree guards across the city can be seen embedded into tree trunks; many more have transformed into garbage bins.

"It is indeed extremely unfortunate to see tree guards being used as dust bins by citizens. The metal guards are meant to protect vulnerable plants from damage due to vehicle movements, cattle-grazing and such. However, about 50% of tree guards across the city are being used by people to throw plastic bottles,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

"While a gigantic tree might keep on growing with the mesh infused, some individuals might die if they cannot withstand damage

—Dr BN Divakara, scientist, Institute of Wood Science and Technology



CITY / PAGE 2

Cosmic Dance

Zero shadow Sunday and a parade of planets, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, await Bengaluru skies

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Without a shadow of doubt

At 12.17 pm on Sunday, vertical objects in Bengaluru will cast no shadows due to zero shadow day

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Folks, brace yourselves to go shadow-less on Sunday afternoon, more precisely at 12.17 pm. It's a zero shadow day for Bengaluru. "The zero shadow day occurs at different places at different times. For example, it occurs on April 24 in Bengaluru, but on some other day in Tumakuru. If we measure the shadow length at the same longitude but at a different latitude we will get the calculations right. For example, if we measure the shadow length at Bhopal and calculate it by the distance between Bengaluru and the Madhya Pradesh capital, we can measure the circumference of the earth. Similarly, Bengaluru, Chennai

and Mangaluru are on the same latitude. The zero shadow occurs in the three cities on the same day, but at different times. In Bengaluru, it will be at 12.17 pm, but it will occur a bit earlier in Chennai and a bit later in Mangaluru," Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium director Pramod Galgali said.

On a zero shadow day, the sun is right overhead at its zenith and as a result, vertical objects, including those standing, hardly cast a shadow while on all other days throughout the year, the sun is known to cast a shadow for every object, even at noon.

Officials said the earth's axis is tilted at 23.5 degrees. As a result, at no point in the day is the sun exactly overhead – except it will be on April 24 at Bengaluru's latitude.

When the sun rises in the morning or sets in the evening, people witness the shadows gradually decrease and increase. But at noon, the shadows are the shortest as the sun is right above, but not perfectly above.

Planet parade

Observing a planet with the naked eye in the sky is a thrilling experience. But this will be an extraordinarily thrilling weekend as one will be able to see four planets in a row. On April 23, Saturn, Mars, Venus and Jupiter will be visible above the horizon early in the morning in the northern hemisphere. Mercury will join this parade of planets in mid-June.

The last time five planets aligned in the night sky was in 2020. These alignments take time to develop. Venus, Mars and Saturn have been night sky neighbours since late March. On April 4 and 6, they came so close together when viewed from Earth that Mars and Saturn appeared to be closer than the width of the full moon in the south-east early morning sky. Jupiter turned the trio into a foursome in mid-April.

The Moon will remain above the horizon between April 23 and 29 but the four planets will remain in their cosmic line until early July. Uranus and Neptune will also be in the field of view in the northern hemisphere during the alignment. Uranus will be between Mercury and Mars and will be visible in areas without much light pollution. It might be visible to the naked eye but binoculars are recommended. Viewing Neptune will require a telescope.

Galgali said, "One has to look at the eastern sky early in the morning. It is a rare sight one must enjoy."

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Catch Vidyarthi Bhavan at Chowdiah Memorial Hall

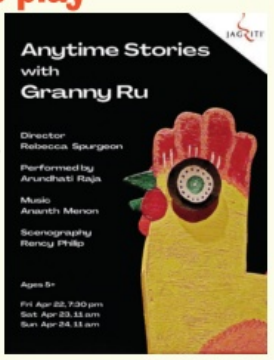
On April 15, an Instagram post indicated that an outlet of the popular South Indian joint Vidyarthi Bhavan will be launched in Malleswaram. Many foodies expressed their excitement. But the truth is, it is not the restaurant that is coming to Malleswaram, but a play named Vidyarthi Bhavan, scripted by well-known theatre personality Rajendra Karanth and directed by Arjun Kabbina. As per ET Online, the play is an attempt to chronicle many memorable events and anecdotes the Vidyarthi Bhavan's dosa has been privy to for about eight decades, its owner Arun Adiga told the media. Adiga said, "The legacy of the Vidyarthi Bhavan began over 75 years ago and now we are celebrating this by organising a play aptly titled Vidyarthi Bhavan."

Bangalore Theatre Foundation will perform the play at Chowdiah Memorial Hall for three days from May 6, ET Online reported.

— Vaishnavi Gopalraj

2 THINGS TO DO

01 Child's play



Jagriti Theatre's children's show Anytime Stories with Granny Ru returns to theatre this weekend after opening in Dec 2021.

Anytime Stories with Granny Ru is designed for young children using dramatic storytelling making the imaginary worlds of Henny Penny, Old Woman and the Pig and Jack and the Beanstalk come alive. Performed by Arundhati Raja and directed by Rebecca Spurgeon, this show is a must-watch for anyone who loves to disappear into the exciting world of children's stories.

When: April 23 and 24 at 11 am
Tickets: bookmyshow.com

02 Saturday, fun day

If you're yet to make any Saturday plans, here's a fun 12-hour-long festival worth exploring: Cocktail Kompany is organising Cocktail Karnival with 20 performances, over 30 art and fashion-themed pop-ups, more than 10 cocktail lounges, several dance showcases, games, workshops, parties and so much more. F 16s and Parvaaz will be the headliners of the event. **Where: Golf Avenue, Domlur**
When: April 23, 12 pm to 12 am
Tickets: insider.in

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‘Shroud of secrecy’ surrounding Blue Line work

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The Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) in a meeting on Friday discussed the implications of developing the 55-km-long Metro Blue Line (Reach 2A and 2B). However, the Environment Support Group (ESG) questioned the way the public consultation was carried out.

Leo F Saldanha, Coordinator/ Trustee, ESG, pointed out that the meeting was an effort to debate last mile connectivity from upcoming Metro stations, especially in Silk Board to KR Puram, and from KR Puram to the largely periurban and rural landscapes en route to the airport.

“At the outset, this seems like a process that should be part of every infrastructure project development. As these reaches are being developed with financial assistance from Asian Development Bank, safeguard policies of this agency would apply. It is plausible that these consultations are being organised in line with such safeguard policies,” he said.

The Blue Line will connect busy junctions like Silk Board and KR Puram

However, he questioned the decision-making relating to planning, building and implementation of such projects.

“Several questions come up such as if the expansion of the Bengaluru Metro in these reaches are in compliance with the directions of the High Court which has held officers of planning and implementing agencies personally accountable to following provisions of the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961,” he said.

Saldanha stated that during the focused group discussion which was held online, it was clear that many documents were unavailable to the participants.

“Before and during one such focus group discussion, I raised concerns about such consultations and that its possible non-compliance with statutory norms of planning and development of the project, particularly when there was lack of information about what to expect from the proposed projects,” he explained.

For instance, the Detailed Project Report (DPR) had not been initially shared with anyone who was participating in such discussions. Subsequently, after the discussion, BMRCL shared the DPR, said Saldanha.

It was also not clear if BMRCL approached planning authorities with appropriate applications, which in this case, would not only involve the Bengaluru Metropolitan Planning Committee but also Bengaluru International Airport Planning Authority, and Town Planning authorities of Devanahalli and Hoskote regions, and if these applications were available for public review as is statutorily required.”

This project demands careful review per the processes required in KTCP Act as is directed by the High Court, he said.

APATHY. IGNORANCE. CRUELTY.

These are only some of the many challenges that animal activists battle on a daily basis in Bengaluru, where perpetrators take advantage of systemic loopholes

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Despite much being written about animal cruelty in Bengaluru and beyond, it is a never-ending struggle for animal welfare workers who rue that the cops’ lack of know-how of animal laws and apathy towards animal cruelty are the reasons behind an increase in such incidents.

In a recent case, an FIR was lodged with the Jnanabharathi Police Station against the driver of a white Maruti Suzuki Brezza for running over and killing a stray dog on April 19. The accused has been booked under Section 428, 429 and 279 of the Indian Penal Code Act and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.

According to Tarun Agarwal, anti-cruelty officer, People for Animals (PfA), there is a complete lack of information on the legal framework to deal with such cases.

“When we reached out to the Jnanabharathi Police Station to file an FIR, the officials declined our request and we were told to reach out to the traffic police as it was a hit-and-run case. The officials also said that it is not a criminal offense. Every time we reach out to the police with such cases, they keep beating around the bush and refrain from registering cruelty cases,” said Agarwal.

Animal welfare activists say the Department of Animal Husbandry of the government of Karnataka and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike’s (BBMP) Animal Husbandry division should be the agencies responsible for spreading awareness about animal laws. However, they have been dragging their feet on the issue.

“These agencies receive enough funds to carry out such activities. However, they are lackadaisical about it. Only if people knew it is a crime and they would be jailed, the rate of such criminal incidents would have gone down. Those who are deliberately killing the animals and harming them should get stern punishment,” added Agarwal.

Stray dogs in the city are at risk of being poisoned or run over by animal haters; activists want a stronger legal system

Experts say that BBMP is the official custodian of street dogs in the city via the ABC/ARV program. When a street dog or caregivers are harassed, BBMP can intervene, counsel and educate the harasser.

“When such extreme incidents happen, BBMP can even file complaints with the police. However, it takes BBMP an entire day or more to file a complaint. Efficient handling of cases does happen occasionally but it’s not uniform across all the police stations. Either officers are not fully aware of the animal laws or don’t give it a priority. This must change,” said Harini Raghavan of Citizens for Animal Birth Control.

> “Officials at the police station refused our request to file an FIR initially. There’s a complete lack of awareness about the law
>
> –Tarun Agarwal, PfA

So, what happened?

The incident took place at MV Layout. According to Ramachandra Bhatta, a resident who reported the case and registered the FIR, the driver deliberately hit the dog and drove away.

“The footage shows it was done on purpose. The driver killed the animal purposely and ran,” said Bhatta. He then immediately reached out to the Jnanabharathi Police Station to lodge a complaint.

“I retrieved the vehicle’s number plate and went to book a complaint. However, the police asked me to reach out to the traffic police. We had to provide copies of FIRs filed under similar circumstances from other police stations and the complaint was registered only after that,” he said.

According to officials from the Jnanabharathi Police Station, the vehicle will soon be seized.

“We wrote to the Regional Transport Office on Thursday and have received the address of the accused. A chargesheet will be filed after a preliminary investigation and the case will be taken up. We will also write to the RTO to revoke the driving license of the accused,” said Lakshman Naik, inspector, Jnanabharathi Police Station.

Cop to the rescue of RTI activist

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It was an alert cop’s actions that saved the day for a 64-year-old RTI activist who was accosted by a biker and his pillion rider.

Around 7pm, HM Venkatesh was on his way home in Judicial Layout, travelling in his son’s Hyundai Verna car when he observed that he was being followed by a bike with a pillion rider.

Venkatesh took the service road towards Kodigehalli when he was waylaid by the bike. They started hitting his car windows and were trying to break it when a police officer going on the same road in his jeep noticed what was happening. The officer, identified as Sathyanarayana, who heads the Yelahanka Police Station stopped his jeep and caught hold of the person who was hitting the car.

During the scuffle, the inspector told the duo that they could approach the jurisdictional police station and file a complaint or grievance they had with Venkatesh, but they were not ready to listen. When the officer alerted the control room and managed to pin down one of the riders, the two overpowered him and fled the spot.

“They accosted me at least five times on my way and only when they saw me driving my car into the Kodigehalli police station, they stopped,” Venkatesh told Bangalore Mirror.

The RTI activist does not know who is behind this attack as he had filed several RTIs in relation to an alleged scam of Rs 700-plus crore in Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited.

Venkatesh said that it could be handiwork of the henchmen of some contractors involved in the scam. “They were armed and dangerous and if I had not locked my car and remained inside, aided by the timely intervention of the police inspector, things would have been different for me,” Venkatesh pointed out, adding that he filed a complaint with the Kodigehalli police ultimately.

Infra makes Kanakapura a hot favourite

It's also gaining prominence for many tourist spots including popular waterfalls

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has decided to fast track the delayed Bengaluru-Kanakapura highway. In fact, Kanakapura road is being developed as an alternative to Mysore road. Once this road is fully developed, it will give a big push to the property development in the adjacent areas.

Among the multiple roads to Mysuru, the most prominent is the road which passes via Bidadi, Ramanagar, Channapatna, Maddur, Mandya and Srirangapatna. However, for those who are residing in and around Kanakapura, and Hosur road, people prefer to take the Kanakapura road to reach Mysuru. This road passes via Kaggalipura, Harohalli, Kanakapura, Satanur, Halagur and Malavalli; Bannur is an easy access to heritage city due to less traffic. The new road also features a four-lane road till Kanakapura and then makes it a paved two lane till Karnataka border which connects Sathyamangalam and Coimbatore. By-passes have been planned at important places like Kaggalipura, Udyapura, Harohalli, Kanakapura and Sathanur etc.

Kanakapura road is also gaining prominence for its many tourist spots. This is the road one has to take to visit the famous spots like Sangama, the confluence of Arkavathi and Cauvery River and Mekedatu, Muttatti, Chunchi falls, Gaganachukki and Bharachukki. This road is also taken to reach famous pilgrim spots like BR Hills and MM Hills as well.

Of late, Kanakapura road is turning out to be the preferred highway for those who want to experiment with different types of food. The Kote Idli, Ratna hotel dose and Chiblu Idli are some of the favourite ones.

Kanakapura road is turning out to be a heaven for property buyers and investors. If you happen to travel on Kanakapura road, one can see a sea of change in development. A lot of high rise buildings have come up while tailor-made properties have made their mark all along the highway till NICE road. However, many properties with green surroundings have turned out to be the biggest highlight for those planning to buy property on this stretch.

Kanakapura Rd connects to pilgrim spots like BR Hills and MM Hills

Real estate developers say that there are a number of factors that have aided the growth of Kanakapura road.

The extension of the green line of Metro has helped the public. While Metro has helped the public to avoid the traffic on the ground, the widening of the Kanakapura road and its proposed widening to four-lane highway further has been helping people staying here.

Meanwhile, another advantage for those buying property is that south Bengaluru is set to get its longest flyover of 1.2 km stretch on Kanakapura road.

The proposed flyover will be constructed at the outer ring road-Kanakapura road junction near Sarakki. The flyover will be constructed in such a way that the vehicles on ORR which now get stuck for minutes at the junction will have a smooth flow of traffic while traffic congestion and the waiting time at Kanakapura road side will reduce significantly.

Extension of the green line of Metro, proposal to make the longest flyover of South B'luru of 1.2 km stretch, and tailor-made properties make area attractive for home-buyers

Another highlight of this flyover is that it will come under a Metro line. While the Metro piers are at a height of 13.5 metres, the proposed flyover will come at a height of 5.5 metres from the ground level. BBMP sources said that the four-laned flyover will begin from the Ilyas Nagar junction and will have a width of 17 metres.

Interestingly, we have similar 'flyovers under flyovers' at Nayandahalli-Mysore road where the ORR flyover is below the Mysore road flyover and on Electronics City where the NICE road flyover is below the electronics city expressway and the proposed electronics city metro line.

— Prakash VL

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PRR boon for Nelamangala property buyers

There is less traffic and more greenery

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has invited tenders for the much-awaited Peripheral Ring Road (PRR). The PRR will bring many peripheral areas closer to different parts of the city.

Nelamangala, which was once a 'far away' town from the city, will now get easier access to many parts of the city. As per the BDA's plan, the PRR will merge with the existing NICE road (that connects Nelamangala road with Magadi, Mysuru, Kanakapura, Bannerghatta and Hosur roads). This new road will enable easy travelling from Nelamangala to airport road (where there commuters can travel in 20 to 30 minutes as against more than an hour now), Doddaballapur road, Chikkaballapur road, Bagalur, old Madras, Sarjapur and Hosur roads.

The PRR is also set to increase the property development near Nelamangala. Many property buyers and potential investors are eyeing this sector as these areas offer a host of advantages compared to other areas. There are many factors to consider before buying the property. So, the properties in and around Nelamangala offer budget properties as there are many affordable properties which is a big plus point. There is less traffic and more greenery. Most of the properties in and around Nelamangala are well developed so that people can easily come and start building their homes, say the property developers. The realty developers of Nelamangala feel that the areas in North West of Bengaluru have a number of favourable factors which are attracting the property buyers.

As per the BDA's plan, the Peripheral Ring Road will merge with the existing NICE Road (that connects Nelamangala road with Magadi, Mysuru, Kanakapura, Bannerghatta and Hosur roads)

Another advantage for Nelamangala residents would be the Metro network which is now being extended till Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC). There is a plan to build a Metro till Kadabagere on Magadi road. . As the construction work is nearly complete, the BMRCL is now planning to throw open this project by next year. Once the Metro line is open, then it will be easier for the locals to travel to Majestic, Kanakapura and Mysuru roads easily. As there are plans to connect the Metro network to the airport, the locals can take a train towards the airport as well. The Metro connection to Whitefield and Electronics City is also chugging along at a fast pace and hence the locals can take a train to their workplaces via Metro train. There are also plans to extend the Metro network from BIEC towards Nelamangala in the future phases. The NICE road is also a big plus point. BMTC is currently operating services via NICE road which is a big boon for the residents to head to Electronics City and Whitefield and this helps the people to avoid the City traffic to reach the tech campuses.

-PRAKASH VL

Luxury home market blooms post covid

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Biggest reason is covid-19-induced lifestyle changes, such as WFH and online schooling

The mid-luxury and high-end luxury segments of real estate are going strong post-covid-19. According to a survey conducted by India Sotheby's International Realty, 89 per cent of respondents who want to invest in real estate will do so in the next two years. This percentage is only with regards to High-Net Worth Individuals (HNIs) who will invest in residential real estate while the remaining would invest in commercial real estate.

Luxury is affordable?

While we have seen the government push for affordable housing, there has been a peculiar rise in the demand in the luxury segment. The motivation is money, says Chetan Patel, the director of one of the leading real estate companies in the country adding,

"Covid-19 proved to be a blessing in disguise for residential real estate, and the demand for luxury homes, especially peaked across demographics. One of the most important drivers of demand in the luxury segment is low interest rates; buyers can stretch their budget by adding some extra loan amount, but with a very affordable EMI. Post-covid-19, more consumers have started preferring projects with best-in-class amenities, which are slightly more expensive than a standalone project. Buyers of luxury real estate tend to be very detail-specific. With the various government initiatives, there has been more transparency in the real estate sector."

A matter of convenience

Sometimes luxury is that slight, but important distinction between a 'regular' and 'premium' project, national vice-chairman, NAREDCO, Niranjan Hiranandani says, "The new-age homebuyers are favouring township development that offers holistic living experience with best-in-class social fabric, community living, good civic infrastructure, proximity to daily conveniences and walk-to-work option with office space accessibility.

The branded developers have quickly integrated the renewed demand of the home-seekers in their project planning to fuel the sales velocity."

Boman Irani, president-elect, CREDAI-National, says, "We usually consider Rs 1 to Rs 3 crore as aspirational; there are higher segments, but overall there is an explosion seen in this market segment. The major reasons behind these explosions are: incomes have increased (thanks to the restoration of salaries and also since the pandemic confined us to our homes, savings increased too as expenditure dipped). Also, many had invested in the stock market and earned great returns, which they then diverted towards a home purchase. The buyer in the luxury segment is well-educated; he understands what he wants; for example, the location is very important for this buyer and it's a factor that is non-negotiable. Buyers in this segment are seeking hassle-free and long-term maintenance, facility management services that have the back-end issues sorted."

Innovation drives demand

While the luxury housing segment has been performing well, many like Patel feel that this shouldn't make developers complacent, but instead they should invest in research and methodology of what exactly works, he says, "HNIs and affluent Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) have been investing in the luxury market. Luxury real estate calls for creativity and an in-depth understanding of the taste and preferences of the buyer. Developers have always been careful and provided the needed environment to their potential buyers. A hybrid mix of lifestyle with fitness, recreation, experience and entertainment all at one place, thus reducing dependencies on outside club membership, fitness centres, etc bodes well for affluent buyers as they save time and get the best-in-class experience as well. However, the Indian luxury segment is still at a growth stage; we can expect more innovation and services going forward."

-- Times Property

NRIs, now is the time to buy a home back home

If you are a NRI looking to purchase property here, then this is a good time to go the whole hog. This is because real estate market in India has never looked as lucrative

With passing time, the growing emotional attachment towards their homeland is what drives a large segment of Non-resident Indians (NRIs) to invest in property in India. Moreover, the pandemic, too, has played a key role in redefining homeownership for many, especially for those NRIs who want to own property in their native place. In a recent survey by a realty firm, 63 per cent of the polled NRIs state this as their reason for buying homes in India now.

RBI nod not necessary

Recently, the Reserve Bank of India had decreed that NRIs and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders do not require its prior approval for acquisition and transfer of immovable property in India, other than agricultural land, farmhouse and plantation property. This makes it easier for NRIs to make a quick purchase.

Preference for luxury

Luxury properties have emerged as a hot favourite with NRIs because of the depreciating rupee value— which translates into greater buying power— and ongoing developer discounts and offers. As per the survey, a majority of NRIs are buying property for self-use rather than as an investment. Maximum respondents (69 per cent) were high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) who preferred a premium city apartment or villa in the price range of Rs 10-25 crore.

Lowest interest rates

Just because you are an NRI, it doesn't mean you need to spend all your savings on a home. However, if you do desire to buy a house immediately, there is a surfeit of ready-to-move-in (RTMI) homes available in the luxury

housing market. If you plan to buy an abode with a housing loan, then this is the best time to apply for it because home loan interest rates are presently at their decadal lowest. Some retail banks are offering a housing loan at 6. 5 per cent. And if you have an NRE (Non-Resident External) bank account, it's even better since you can also apply for the housing loan online. NRIs are eligible for a housing loan amount of up to 80 per cent of the property value. Having an NRE account also means that you have the advantage of being able to repatriate the capital invested in the property when you sell it in future.

What appeals to NRIs

Having lived abroad, there's no doubt that the affluent NRI segment has a higher standard of living. When it comes to investing in a home, they do not want to cut corners or buy a smaller apartment. They are willing to pay the luxury price tag simply because they know they can enjoy the same sophisticated lifestyle with similar world-class amenities and facilities. As per a recent consumer survey, at least 73 per cent NRIs now prefer properties priced between Rs 90 lakh and Rs 2. 5 crore, with a preference for 3-and 4-BHK luxury homes. In the pre-Covid-19 survey (2019), just 41 per cent preferred properties in this price range as compared to the affordable and mid-segment homes.

Hot demand for RTMI homes

According to the survey, at least 67 per cent of the polled NRIs are looking for RTMI homes. If we consider the overall survey trends (including NRIs and resident Indians), just 29 per cent preferred to buy RTMI homes, with another 27 per cent respondents opting for under-construction properties that will be delivered within a year.

NRI home-buying trends

NRIs are looking to make the most of the prevailing market conditions in India, including discounts, offers and lowest-best home loan rates. A large segment of buyers will only consider properties by branded developers who have the highest project completion record, resulting in the lowest execution risk.

Another reason for this choice is a desire to buy into projects with international-grade amenities. According to the survey, most of the polled NRIs seeking property in India are aged between 35-45 years.

— Leena Mudbidri for Times Property

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It's a tree for all

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

paper cups, and all kinds of garbage," said R Aravind, a resident who is part of the initiative.

The tree guard cleaning drive was started on April 20 by Citizens for Citizens (C4C). The volunteers are looking at cleaning around 35 metal guards in and around the Vasanth Nagar area.

"The guards are meant to protect the plants. However, people are filling them up with trash, impacting water percolation and thus the growth of the trees. It has become a habit that needs to go away. Once a guard becomes a blackspot, more and more people start dumping. We plan to clean all tree guards in our area and maintain them from now on. We will continue this exercise and we hope other residents' groups all across the city will take up this as a maintenance exercise," said Rajkumar Dugar of C4C. Green activists and experts said the metal guards should not only be kept free of trash but those that have outlived their purpose should be removed and recycled. Several rusted tree guards embedded into tree trunks are a common sight in the city.

Experts said plantation drives with wire cages is an old legacy. However, with a fewer number of free-roaming cattle on the street, the primary threat to these saplings has already gone down.

"The metal guards are installed to protect the young saplings from biotic damages. However, as the tree continues to grow, the guard has to be removed. If not, the iron mesh gets embedded in the trunk. This impacts and harms tree growth. While a gigantic tree might keep on growing with the mesh infused, some individuals might die if they cannot withstand the damage. The metal guards should be removed after a couple of years, once the saplings grow into small trees," said Dr BN Divakara, senior scientist, Institute of Wood Science and Technology.

Protest, we shall

Youth Congress members held a protest in the city against the Central Government against the rising inflation and its demolition tactics

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I, NAKIA D M, D/o, DAWOOD YUSUF ALI MUKADAM residing at Flat No.101, Hussaini Avenue, 2nd Floor, 22nd Main, 7th Cross, J P Nagar 5th Phase, Bangalore 560078. have changed my name to NAQIYA DAWOOD MUKADAM vide affidavit dated 22.04.2022 sworn before notary D S Chandra kanth, Bangalore.

I Rishi Kamalesh Patel S/o Danabhai Kamalesh Patel R/o A 301, Brigade Caladium Apartment, Dasarahalli Main Road, Hebbal, Bengaluru Karnataka -560024, have changed my name to Rishe Patel

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PSI exam scam

Guilty stare at a lifetime ban from similar exams

DG-IGP Praveen Sood says probe is on; legal action would also be initiated against culprits

Bellie.Thomas
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Discrepancy found in OMR sheets submitted and evaluated

State top cop Praveen Sood said on Friday that no one who adopted unfair means to get through the Police Sub-Inspectors' written examination will be spared. This includes those names are on the list of selected candidates or those who appeared for the exams and bribed the evaluators.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) sleuths are now probing each of the 545 PSI applicants who appeared for the exams and are registering cases against them if evidence is found prima facie. They will compare the OMR sheets -- one copy of what they had answered in the script distributed to them - and the exam OMR scripts available with the evaluators. According to CID sources, PSI applicants who had allegedly bribed the evaluators had answered only a few questions that they knew well and the other questions they were asked to leave blank so that evaluators could fill them up and make the candidates score good marks.

"If found guilty, not only would legal action be initiated against them, but they would also be disqualified for lifetime from attempting or appearing for any such exams in the future," DG-IGP Praveen Sood said.

BM had reported on April 22 that two people had been arrested in the scam

The CID officials have so far arrested nine people including four candidates and three invigilators of a coaching centre in Kalaburagi run by a BJP woman wing leader named Divya Hagaragi. Her husband Rajesh was arrested after evidence was found against him taking monetary benefits from candidates. He was also allegedly non-cooperative with the cops.

Probe begins

In the second week of April, the CID sleuths initiated probe into irregularities of the PSI exam after an FIR was registered against one Veeresh, the son of a head constable at the Chowk police station in Kalaburagi, who secured 120 marks though he had answered only 12 questions on his OMR sheet. CID sources said that Veeresh had paid more than Rs 7 lakh to one of evaluators.

The PSI written exam was held in October 2021 for around 545 posts. Soon after the results were declared and the list of PSIs were out, allegations that some aspirants had resorted to illegal means to pass. "Though we had no evidence in hand to prosecute or bring the culprits to books, we initiated a inquiry by the CID who smelt a rat and subsequently filed cases on candidates as well as invigilators/evaluators and started delving into the cases," said a police officer.

> **"It's difficult to get tech evidence in such crimes, but we have our ways to find out**
> –Praveen Sood, DG-IGP

"This is a manipulative and layered crime. It's difficult to get technological evidence against such crimes, but we have our ways to find out. We are dealing with the cases with an iron fist," Sood added.

Get into action for Earth's sake!

On the occasion of World Earth Day 2022, several students of Mount Carmel College and volunteers from Namma Bengaluru Foundation organised a "Save Earth, Save Our Future" campaign at the Cunningham Road, Balekundri Circle on Friday.

More than 25 students and professors took part in the campaign to show their appreciation towards the planet on the day, which had 'Invest in our Planet' as the theme for the year.

Students held placards with slogans such as, 'Save Trees, Save Earth', Go Green, Go Cycling', 'Switch off your engine at Signal and Save fuel', 'Avoid using Plastics', 'Save Lakes, Save Namma Bengaluru' and so on.

Pedestrians waiting at the circle were eager to learn more about the campaign and the message behind it. They clicked photographs and inquired about how they can contribute to the preservation of our planet. Some passersby were pleased to see the campaign and even stopped to join the campaign. The students also requested motorists who stopped at the traffic signal to take the first step by turning off their vehicle engine. Turning off vehicles at the signal not only saves fuel and money, but it also most importantly saves the environment and our planet, they said.

A plea to people to opt for sustainable modes of travel, cut plastic on occasion of World Earth Day

They also urged that sustainable travel alternatives like walking and cycling for short distances and using public transport for long distances be used.

The citizens were encouraged to save lakes and save trees in our city. "Lakes play a vital role in restoring ground water, preventing floods, storage of water during the dry seasons and maintaining the eco-system. Trees absorb carbon dioxide and supply oxygen thereby supporting life and reducing air pollution in our cities," the students said.

Some volunteers encouraged pedestrians to make efforts to ensure a sustainable future for coming generations. Reduced plastic footprint is one of the most important measures toward sustainability.

—Iffath Fathima

RAJMOHAN SUDHAKAR

EVER CHANGING MOODS

Write to him at c-rajmohan.sudhakar@timesgroup.com

A viral brain fog

As much as we want to deny it as a collective, fact is, the pandemic has left us sifting through a melancholy mist, akin to that lost soul in a 70s Bollywood flick, drifting in and out of the fog haunting the protagonist who follows in curious intrigue to the tune of a poignant melody.

The 'sure foots' advocating all is hunky dory while keeping us in the grim-hold of vile propaganda, cocooned away from ground realities in their 'borrowed-from-the-west' social media echo chambers, are shamelessly exposing their utter insensitivity.

Before the bulldozers arrive, defying the law of the land in cahoots with pliant media onboard giving directions, as we saw on broadcast news TV the other day, here are a few instances that suggest humanity is in fact behaving as though it has lost its marbles somewhere along the way, grappling with the pandemic.

When news broke of the World Health Organisation's imminent release of what it thinks are updated figures of coronavirus deaths in the world, including that of India, global media reports said India was trying hard to stall the supposedly 'damning information'. What is it you ask, this new revelation: As opposed to the official toll of 5 lakh 20 thousand, WHO has now estimated the deaths in India in 2020 and 2021 to be around 40 lakh, the highest for any country, according to reports.

Soon, we saw the WHO director-general Tedros Ghebreyesus in Ahmedabad hosted by the prime minister at the Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit, and the latter addressing the WHO boss as 'Tulsi Bhai' on the occasion. That is indeed a peculiar coincidence.

It is curious that in a matter of weeks after somehow wrestling out of the pandemic's grip, the attention of the global establishment was stolen in no time by the west-backed 'Ukraine standing up to aggressor Russia' trope. Even those of us who did not know there existed regions such as Donbas, Luhansk or Lviv, were dragged into the conflict as the powers that be would have us condemn 'the barbarism'; did not matter if you were wasting away in an impoverished African or Indian setting (highly possible as per the recent global hunger index). Absurd as the aforementioned were, little or no curiosity towards the origins of the coronavirus amongst the so-called academia, intelligentsia as well as the politicians is highly suspicious if not bewildering given the extent to which the virus pummelled the global economy for two long years. We all deserve an apology at the least, don't we? Forget about an investigation into this bizarre coronavirus in earnest.

Meanwhile, one does expect the oft-floundering British premier to keep it in his own country rather than offer a glimpse of his buffoonery to Indian audiences during his recent visit to the subcontinent, as if there was any of it required here at the moment or perhaps counterparts needed cover. Johnson is about to face a third inquiry as he returns home on whether he misled the British parliament about breaking the law. It is highly likely that Johnson's time is running out as the UK's prime minister even as the ruling Tories seem to have had enough of his ever boring 'get-on-with-it' drivel.

The most awful thing was, Johnson, who's looking for a free trade deal with India, pictured in the driving seat of a bulldozer while earthmovers had just boxed in a community on the edge in the newest of schadenfreudes of the powerful — no doubt aimed at plain bullying of the poor Indian Muslim, personal and economical, at a time of record inflation. The atrocity was not once condemned by the current dispensation.

As the aforementioned leaders of two nations that once had a master-servant relationship now seem to deflect and bulldoze urgent priorities in their respective constituencies, audiences worldwide are offered a ring-side view of real-life drama unravelling with the Johnny Depp-Amber Heard defamation trial (the former a boomer and latter a millennial) underway in the United States. This is another instance where the absurd replaces the normal post pandemic. Depp testifying what he did or did not do to his ex-wife or Heard stating what Depp did, essentially symbolises the post-pandemic frustration of the celebrity; the miserable human condition that craves for attention even in life's greatest misfortunes. Is the whole world to sit in judgement of two people's personal lives? The number of media outlets live streaming the defamation trial exposes the level of voyeurism technological advances have left us in.

Perhaps we have pawned honesty and transparency as a nation and world in the face of calamities, natural and human-induced. Or else why would not the rich and powerful acknowledge the slippery social slope we find ourselves in while pretending it is business as usual?

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

CATWALK OF THE YEAR

This picture of a male tiger in his prime was taken at Kabini National Park.

The picture was clicked by reader **Suresh Kumar**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com**

Our walls of shame

In a neighbourhood of Indiranagar, flyers & posters cover walls, trees, lampposts & every other available space

Palike had led an active campaign to rid the city of ugly flexes and posters until recently

You've seen them all. Flyers advertising PGs, posters selling WI-FI connections, a leaflet with a home chef's contact details – these are some common sights for the average Bengalurean out for a walk. For several years, public and private walls in Bengaluru were free from film posters, hoardings and flyers thanks to the BBMP's drive against vinyl/ plastic banners and illegal hoardings. The campaign was effective in getting rid of this menace from the city's roads. However, flyers and illegally put-up posters seem to have made a comeback with many Bengalureans reporting them.

One evening, a resident of Indiranagar was out for an evening stroll when they experienced something distressing. Every wall, every lamppost, every tree in the neighbourhood everywhere these posters were all over the placwas covered in ugly posters.

"People who live or work in Indiranagar are tired of this. We are surprised that this has been allowed to happen after a strong campaign by the authorities to ban illegal hoardings. Seeing these flyers covering any available public space is a civic embarrassment," complained a resident on the condition of anonymity.

Shashi Kumar, a resident of Indiranagar, was witness to two phases of development before the Smart City plan was put into place. During both phases, he saw the government invest heavily in taking care of residents' needs such as improving roads and footpaths and fixing the potholes.

"But, it seems there are still too many citizens who do not respect their surroundings enough to show some courtesy to the Smart City plan. No matter how clean the city looks, these flyers put up everywhere would change the perspective of the Smart City plan," he said.

Flyers are a common form of marketing, but these walls really do need to be clean. The BBMP should take control of this situation with fines and other penalties so that people can be free of these interruptions, Kumar added.

The problem is not only in Indiranagar but the problem with posters is all over Bengaluru. The city has some of the most advanced urban planning measures for its roads, but when it comes to keeping the walls free from being defaced, authorities need to be more vigilant.

— Vaishnavi Gopalraj

DID YOU KNOW?

If you have lived long enough in Bengaluru, Koshy's will not be an unfamiliar name to you. One of the few eateries which has withstood the test of time in a constantly changing city, Koshy's boasts of having hosted some of the most famous people throughout history including India's first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Queen Elizabeth II of England and Soviet statesman Nikita Khrushchev.
Koshy's was formerly known as Parade Cafe, and the air-conditioned section was called the Jewel Box.
It started out as a bakery in 1940, which was set up by the current owner, Prem Koshy's grandfather, PO Koshy. In 1952, the restaurant was built on St Mark's Road, standing next to the bakery where it all first began. The menu too is timeless, like the restaurant, and serves authentic Anglo-Indian, continental, and other dishes from around the world. Thanks to the unchanged recipes, the establishment continues to attract its old-timers and new patrons alike.

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

TAPTHECHATTER

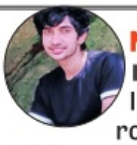
where Bengalureans speak their mind

With power cuts happening frequently, what measures should the government adopt to solve this problem?

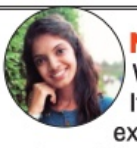
Melvin Anthony Miltan
Student
The government must ensure that outages only occur at times when it is least used if it is not preventable. It must also explore other forms of generating power and implement the same.

Sri Vishnu, Investment Banker
To ensure an uninterrupted flow of power, authorities should keep electricity storage facilities near Bengaluru Urban area or set up an electric generator in KRS Dam in Mysuru. If the government takes the initiative to set up electric facilities, it'll be much easier on a day-to-day basis.

Imroz, Student
Frequent power cuts can be tackled by installing solar panels in a phased-wise manner from rural areas to urban centres. Making suitable arrangements for the implementation of windmills in an appropriate place where the whole power supply can be supplied to the macro level of beneficiaries.



Nagendra Raju,
Mechanical engineer
Installing solar panels on bus-stop roofs and at junctions to generate power for streetlights will help in reducing power cuts.



Nagaveni S, Entrepreneur
Vampire power must be reduced. It's the amount of electricity that's expended when you leave electronics plugged in and it adds up to a shocking 10% of electricity costs! It takes a lot to create this wasted voltage, so cutting down on it will save a lot.

SPEAK TO US

What is that one thing that you miss about old Bengaluru that is now missing from the city?

If you want to be featured in this section, mail us your answer to this question, in 25 words, with 'Tap The Chatter' in the subject line. Mail us with your name, occupation & a picture at mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com or WhatsApp us on 9591233247

Animals in Mysuru forests are still in poachers' net

After implementation of Tiger project, govt taking conservation activities strictly

Prakash VL
mybangaloremirror
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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

Bandipur forest area is still rejoicing the arrival of twin calves who were recently born to an elephant at the reserve forest. This and the recent reduction in poaching cases had brought a sense of relief to wildlife enthusiasts. However, we are certainly not out of the woods.

In the Mysuru area, new cases of poaching and illegal transportation of animal parts have come to light. Recently, there have been many cases of transportation of animal parts and smuggling of ivory and pangolin scales and tiger nails.

After the implementation of the Tiger project in the Mysuru area, the Government has taken conservation activities very strictly. This led to an increase in the number of tigers. But in recent days, many cases have emerged of tiger nails and skin being smuggled. Even though there are separate incidents found, it seems there is no network for this.

Pig snares catching wild

The traps kept for pigs by the farmers near the forests are killing other animals. The smugglers keep traps for catching these animals on nearby farms around the forests as the use of guns make sound. The forest department staff arrested two persons on February 6, who were trying to sell the body parts of the wild animals.

There has been a rise in the number of tigers in the Mysuru area

"Many cases of tiger nails and skin being smuggled have come to light in the recent days. These are separate incidents and there seems to be no network around this

In one incident, a person was trying to sell tiger nails on a road towards HD Kote. In another incident, they were preparing jewellery using tiger nails. On February 14, forest officials arrested six members who killed a tiger and seized tigerskin, a skeleton and 15 nails, a piece of tooth, and others. In 2020 also some people were arrested for killing a Tiger in Kodagu by forest officials.

On April 2, three people were arrested by CID Police in Kushalnagar for trying to sell ivory. In March, Bengaluru Police also arrested three members for trying to sell ivory in Bengaluru. On April 8, three people were arrested in Maddur for selling tiger nails. Police seized 15 tiger nails from them. The accused brought the tiger nails from Nagarahole forest. This case is considered very serious, and police are enquiring more about their involvement in other cases.

Bangalore Mirror
Wild animals killed, publicly auctioned
Police step in after incident of ritualistic killing of animals to spread awareness on poaching

Bangalore Mirror
City BangaloreMirror
Time to scale back
Large pangolin scales seizure puts spotlight on poaching; KFD gets crack

Bangalore Mirror has been reporting on the instances of poaching and killing of wildlife for their body parts

Man kills wife after fight over mobile addiction

A man has been arrested here on the charges of killing his wife after a fight over her mobile addiction, police said on Friday.

According to police, Ashok, a cab driver, had strangled his wife, Vanajakshi (31), at their residence in Kaveripura. The accused quarrelled with his wife over her mobile addiction.

After a heated argument on Sunday night, the accused smothered Vanajakshi to death and fled from the spot. However, the incident came to light on Wednesday when the victim's brother came to see her. After noticing the foul smell emanating from the house, he informed the police.

The couple were married for 15 years and have three children. Vanajakshi worked in a garment factory. He also suspected her of having an affair and questioned her about it.

The accused told police that on Sunday he had slapped his wife after finding her talking to someone on the mobile. The deceased then rushed to the kitchen and brought a log of wood to attack him. He somehow snatched the log and again slapped her. When she fell down, he strangled her and then ran away. **–IANS**

Hijab-clad students not allowed to write II PU exam

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror
@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

The II PU exams began across the State on Friday. However, two college students from the Udupi area in the state, who had approached the Karnataka High Court, challenging the ban on hijab, returned from the exam center as they were not allowed to write the exam wearing hijab. The two girls, Alia and Resham, arrived in an auto-rickshaw at the exam centre wearing hijab. Visuals of the incident depicted that they insisted that they should be allowed to write the exam wearing hijab but the college authorities citing the High Court order denied them entry.

Subsequently, the girls returned home. Notably, this news comes in the backdrop of the hijab protests in Karnataka that took place in January-February this year when some students of Government Girls PU college in the Udupi district of the state alleged that they had been barred from attending classes. During the protests, some students claimed they were denied entry into the college for wearing hijab.

KAUSHIK JN

Meanwhile in Bengaluru several students appeared for the IInd PU exams and there were no instances of unrest reported

Meanwhile, the exams were conducted at 1,076 centres across the state. The exams will go on till May 18. On the other hand, Abhishek Hiremath whose alleged social media post led to the violence in the old town of Hubballi on April 16 night, appeared for the second Pre-University exam on Friday with police protection. Police took Hiremath from the Hubballi sub-jail to the examination venue in a police vehicle. Elaborate security arrangements were made at the exam centres preventing any congregation of people from creating any ruckus.

Primary and Secondary Education Minister B C Nagesh said Bengaluru was the biggest centre where over 5.73 lakh students are writing the PU second-year exam whereas in Kodagu about 6,000 students are appearing for the exam. Also, the photocopy centres were banned around the exam centres to prevent any exam malpractices as is the use of loudspeakers. The students are banned from taking mobiles inside exam halls. The supervisors are permitted to carry a basic set without a camera.

(With inputs from agencies)

HEALTH TIP: Practise cycling on a regular basis to improve your metabolism

Brown rice contains high levels of magnesium, which can help to prevent heart diseases and strokes

BangaloreMirror | 12
Saturday, April 23, 2022
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Let's talk about...

New start-ups tackling strong taboos to take out shame and guilt from sex

The couple behind a new start-up using adult toys and cheeky adverts to challenge long-held taboos say they want to take the "shame, guilt and fear" out of sex in India.

Despite its heritage as the land of the Kama Sutra, open discussions around sexuality and intimacy are often regarded as obscene in the largely conservative country.

MyMuse, founded by Anushka and Sahil Gupta, are tackling this with tongue-in-cheek marketing and creative euphemisms, which they say make the products seem less intimidating and encourage first-time buyers.

"Diwali is coming and so should you! And as always, we're urging you to save the fireworks for the bedroom," exclaimed one such advertisement on Facebook before one of India's biggest holidays, and its customary pyrotechnics, last year.

"There's this shame, guilt and fear associated with buying something that should be used in your intimate areas, and that's the first thing we wanted to turn around," Anushka says.

MyMuse is one of a growing number of businesses riding a wave of sexual liberation amongst urban young professionals, already navigating global trends on Instagram and comfortable with dating apps such as Tinder, Bumble and Hinge.

Investors too are betting on this untapped market in the vast country of 1.4 billion: India's nascent sex toys sector was valued at $91 million by TechSci Research in 2020, and predicted to grow 16 percent annually.

The Guptas began shipping out discreetly packaged vibrators -- "massagers" in MyMuse's genteel parlance -- candles, and lubricants from a spare bedroom in their home during last year's Covid-19 lockdowns.

Benefitting from capital pouring into Indian tech start-ups during the pandemic, the firm received seed funding from venture capitalist firms. They have made more than a dozen hires and now shipping to nearly 200 cities nationwide.

Using a targeted social media campaign, they say they are trying to reframe the conversation around sex away from often "sleazy" portrayals in Bollywood movies.

"(We want to) just remove all of that misogyny, sexism from this idea and just make it something that's beautiful, that's natural, universal," Anushka, who left her job at WeWork to become an entrepreneur, explains.

There are a growing number of services for India's sexually curious: fellow start-up Gizmoswala offers same-day delivery on bondage kits for Mumbai residents, while LoveTreats exhorts online shoppers to discover their "naughty side" with lingerie sets and remote-controlled vibrators.

But they still need to contend with wider society -- particularly older, more conservative generations that idolise female virtue and honour, and a culture where arranged marriages are still the norm.

"There are many Indias when it comes to sexual awareness. While one India has accepted and changed, another is changing slowly and another is still 10 or 20 years behind," sex education specialist Jaya Aiyappa says.

Vigilante groups have attacked couples they believe are not behaving in line with "Indian values".

Politicians and the police have also been accused of raiding hotels, nightclubs and attacking young people for public displays of affection, drinking or wearing immodest clothing.

A haul of vibrators and dildos was seized by customs last year -- the result of a boom in online orders during pandemic lockdowns -- because Indian law still bans the import of "toys that resemble human body parts".

The lack of dialogue around sex can lead to misinformation and abuse, Aiyappa warns, adding that even efforts to introduce a broader sex education curriculum in schools have faced a backlash.

Anushka Gupta says she realised things needed to change when she returned from working abroad and struggled to find even basic sexual health products such as contraceptives and lubricants.

"This is a situation that's fundamentally broken," she said, adding that Indian women often face a culture of enforced silence around sex.

"It's the most typically Indian conundrum where they will not talk to a woman about sex at all until she's married, and the moment she's married they'll be like, 'So when's the baby coming?'"

But beyond challenging social norms, this new wave of start-ups see an opportunity for a "sexual wellness" industry in India. Sahil, who has an MBA from Harvard Business School and previously worked in private equity, says that most young married couples still live with their families -- the bedroom is their only place of real privacy.

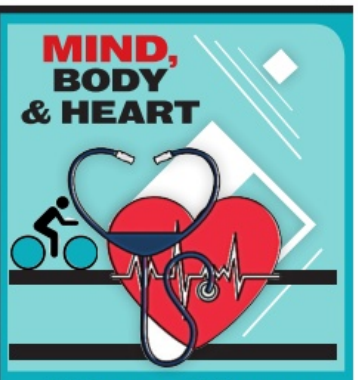
"The bedroom in India for a lot of people is one of the few safe spaces that is untouched," he explains, describing it as a couple's "oasis".

MyMuse already sells bespoke candles and plans to expand into clothing and offer sex counselling services, while Gizmoswala is set to manufacture and export its own-brand toys to other South Asian nations.

Smartphone proliferation and easy access to modern Indian dramas such as Netflix hit Lust Stories are also tackling taboo subjects like same-sex relationships and casual dating, helping to normalise conversations about intimacy.

Requesting anonymity, one 32-year-old professional, says of the shift in attitudes: "It's exciting that this is finally happening in India. The conversation around sex is really changing."

— AFP



All problems solved

Dear Coleen

I'm not sure if anyone else has this problem, but I can't seem to text or email without (apparently) coming off as rude, abrupt or offending someone, even when I'm trying to be funny. It's got to the point where I obsess over what I've written and worry about it afterwards. It happens to an extent at work, but more so with the class WhatsApp group at my son's school. I'm sure parents swerve to avoid me in the playground. Am I overthinking this and can you help please?

COLEEN SAYS

First, let's deal with the class WhatsApp group – these are a nightmare, so my advice is just don't get too involved. Stick to asking about homework and money for school trips, and don't get dragged into any debates – life's too short. Look, I think it's easy to take texts or emails the wrong way or miss the point, plus we're all so used to firing off messages these days without giving them a second thought. You can only be yourself and if people have a problem with that, so be it. As long as you're not being deliberately rude, I don't think you should be worrying to this extent. Maybe these parents are a bit uptight and don't have a sense of humour. In a work context, you could always ask a colleague or your boss if they think you come off as rude or abrupt and get their take on it. You can always follow up a message with a phone call – some things are better dealt with by talking.

Finally, a good tip, which I use all the time if I'm sending a message about something important, is to write it, then leave it for a day and read it again before pressing send.

—Coleen Nolan, Daily Mirror

Why Nargis is looking South

Because she's got an amazing film opposite Pawan Kalyan, says actor

Nargis Fakhri has returned to India after a break. The actor who took a sabbatical due to work stress is now in a happy space and is exploring some great projects.

One of the films she is looking forward to is the one that marks her debut down south as an actor. Back in 2016, she did a dance number in Tamil flick Saagasam. This time around, she will be seen in a full-fledged role opposite Pawan Kalyan in Telugu film Hari Hara Veera Mallu.

Talking about her foray into south cinema, Nargis says, "When I was actively doing Hindi cinema I was so occupied that I had no time to look elsewhere. Now, when this amazing film came my way it was time I explored something new. It is a period film. I haven't done that genre before and it excites me all the more. I love new experiences as they make your life even richer. I will have so many more stories to tell with new experiences like these."

The actor, who will soon begin shooting for the project, is eager to experience working with a south team. She signs off saying, "I am looking forward to working down south as I have heard so many good things about their industry. They say south actors are really sweet. Even though they are such big stars still they are so humble, caring and respectful. That sounds nice and I would definitely like to experience it."

—Onkar Kulkarni, ETimes

Leaked online within hours of release

After getting postponed due to the pandemic and legal issues, Shahid Kapoor and Mrunal Thakur starrer 'Jersey' finally got released in theatres on Friday. According to the latest reports, the film is leaked online hours after it got released in theatres.

The reports suggest that the film is leaked on Tamilrockers and Telegram. However, this is not the first time that a film has been leaked on the first day of its release. In the past, films like 'Radhe: The Most Wanted Bhai', 'Mumbai Saga' and other films too faced the issue of online piracy.

The story of the film revolves around a cricket enthusiast whose dreams of pursuing a career in cricket are fulfilled in his 40s because of his son. It is an official Hindi remake of Nani's Telugu film of the same title. —ETimes

New mum PeeCee is so excited about future

New mom Priyanka Chopra feels 2022 is a life changing year for her. She welcomed her daughter in January this year and is looking forward to a promising decade as she turns 40 in July.

The actress revealed that she is excited about the future and is curious to know where her career will take her. The actress added that she is at the 'precipice of change' and is ready to accept and receive it. Speaking about her birthday in July, Priyanka told a magazine that she doesn't know how she will celebrate it because Nick and she plan each other's birthdays but she hopes to have sand between her toes when she turns 40.

While Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas have refrained from revealing further details about their daughter, her leaked birth certificate has spilled a lot of information. According to the birth certificate obtained by TMZ, Priyanka and Nick have named their baby girl - Malti Marie Chopra Jonas. The couple has taken inspiration from their own Moms for this name. 'Malti' comes from Priyanka's mom Madhumalti Chopra and 'Marie' is inspired from Denise Marie Miller Jonas, Nick's mother.

On the work front, Priyanka has 'It's All Coming Back To Me', 'Citadel', 'Ending Things', and 'Jee Le Zaraa' lined up. —IANS

Sex, drugs & heartbreak

Actor Johnny Depp was grilled about his drug and alcohol use and coarse text messages as he took the witness stand on Thursday for a third day at his defamation case against his ex-wife, Amber Heard.

Heard's lawyer Ben Rottenborn spent more than five hours seeking to undermine the credibility of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" star before the seven-person jury hearing the suit in Fairfax County Circuit Court.

The 58-year-old Depp was asked about his trashing of hotel rooms and the circumstances of an incident in Australia in which the tip of the middle finger on his right hand was severed.Depp testified Wednesday that it was caused by a furious Heard throwing a vodka bottle at him. Her lawyer told the jury Depp had told doctors he cut himself with a knife.

Depp acknowledged during cross-examination that after his finger was cut he used the wounded digit to scrawl messages around the house using his own blood and paint.

Heard's lawyers played a video at one point of Depp slamming cabinet doors in their kitchen and pouring himself a large glass of red wine.

"I did assault a couple of cabinets but I did not touch Miss Heard," Depp said when asked about the video.

In an audiotape played by her lawyer of a conversation between Depp and Heard, she complains about having bruises on her head, a split lip and a black eye. Heard's lawyers have claimed Depp would become a "monster" during drug- and alcohol-fueled benders and physically and sexually abuse Heard. Depp has denied the allegations and claimed it was Heard who was frequently violent during their relationship.

Depp filed a defamation suit against Heard over a column she wrote for The Washington Post in December 2018 in which she described herself as a "public figure representing domestic abuse."

Heard, who starred in the movie "Aquaman," never named Depp -- but he sued her for implying he was a domestic abuser and is seeking $50 million in damages.

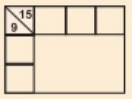
—AFP

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

A clock that advances 5 minutes every hour is set to the correct time. How much time will pass before it displays the correct time again?

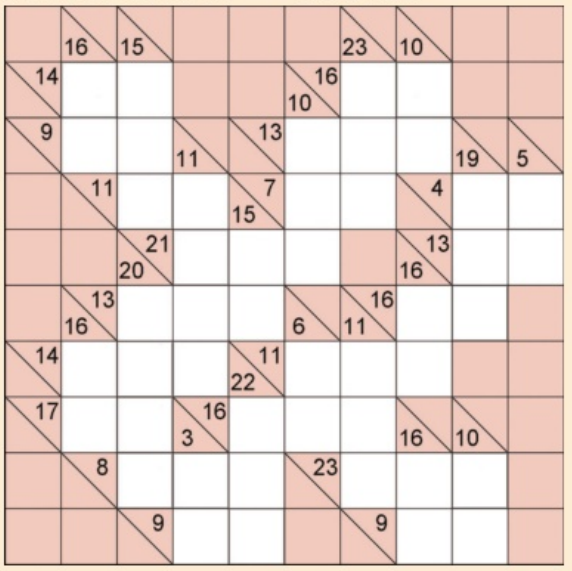
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

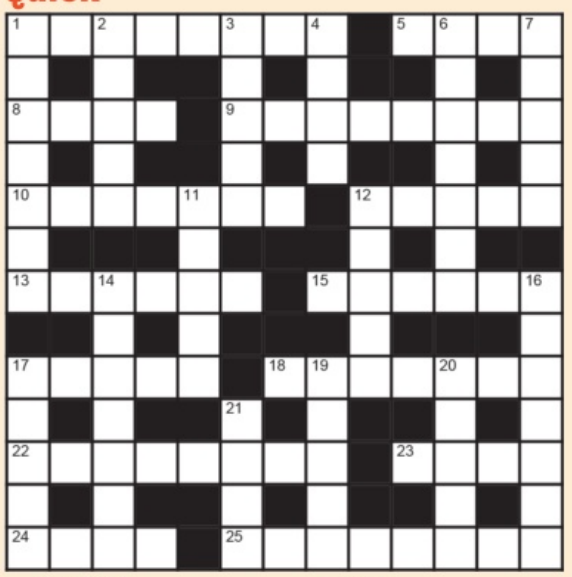


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 It has 366 days (4,4)
5 Kolkata's ___ Gardens (4)
8 Bullocks (4)
9 Puts underwater (8)
10 Acute; strong (7)
12 Shylock's business? (5)
13 ____ forth : emits out effusively? (6)
15 Park spanning 300 acres in the Cantonment Area (6)
17 Spend time in idleness (5)
18 Fools or deceives (7)
22 Intact (8)
23 Masculine person (4)
24 Tug (4)
25 Capital of Hungary (8)

DOWN

1 Good ____ : handsome? (7)
2 Highly skilled (5)
3 Gives out (5)
4 Mountain goats (4)
6 Unsettle (7)
7 Inquisitive (5)
11 Poverty-stricken (5)
12 Customary (5)
14 Proverbially wise king (7)
16 Coming into being (7)
17 Lure (5)
19 Correct text (5)
20 Cover with fabric (5)
21 Pavement edge (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: A EQUALS T

PA PT IKAAKW AR TCKKF RB ADPBZT IKLRWKDXBO ADXB CPK XMXYK XIRSA ADKJ XLAK-WMXWOT.

Linemaro

Baby, I'd run a mile for your smile

Mindchow

Once a woman has forgiven her man, she must not reheat his sins for breakfast

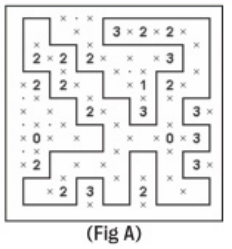
Joke of the day

Colleague to colleague: I have used up all my sick days, so I am calling in dead

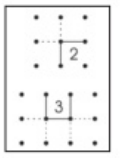
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

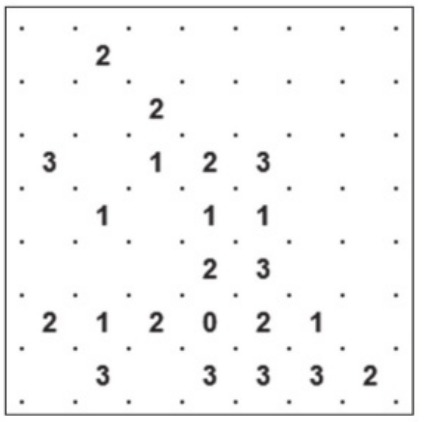


(Fig B) Not Allowed

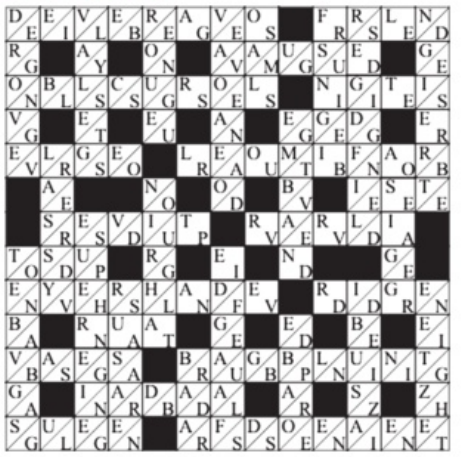
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



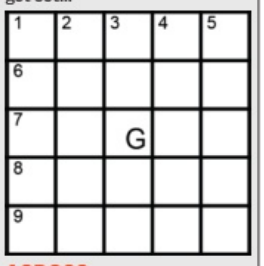
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

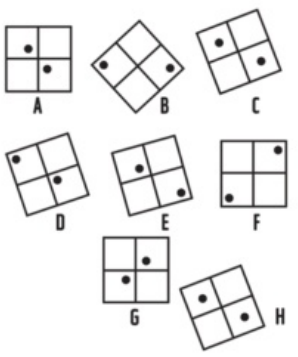
1 Paths; 6 RU car; 7 I grid; 8 A be us; 9 Sperm

DOWN

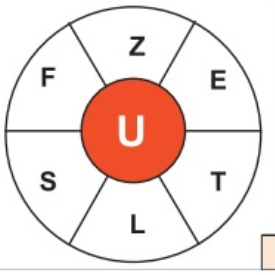
1 Carps; 2 Tiber; 3 A guru; 4 Prims; 5 Shade

Mensapuzzle

Arrange these into four pairs.



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; 06 Good; 08 Outstanding

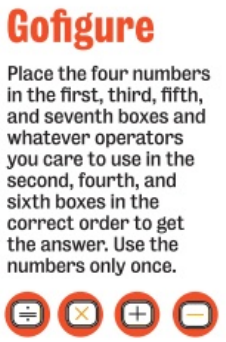
SudokuChallenge

3	8						7	1
5	9						4	6
	7		6		2		3	
			3		9			
	5						1	
			4		8			
	1		7		4		8	
6	3						5	9
7	2						6	4

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 14
2 3 5 8

Medium = 26
2 4 7 8

Hard = 4
2 5 7 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

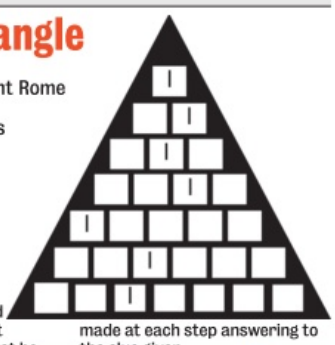
Differences: 1. Mailbox is smaller. 2. Patch on sleeve is higher. 3. Mouth is open. 4. Roof is smaller. 5. Cap is different. 6. Mitten is missing.

Riddler

Which is the odd one out: alpaca, zebra, wilde beest, antelope?

Alpha triangle

1 Third vowel
2 Fifty One in ancient Rome
3 Perjure
4 Hawaiian garlands
5 Man and Capri ?
6 Pizza portions
7 Rips off



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson

GOING OUT TO ANOTHER WILD PARTY TONIGHT, AREN'T YOU, GRANNY?
WHAT GIVES YOU THAT IDEA, SMARTY?
BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS HAVE TROUBLE FINDING YOUR WAY BACK HOME!
2-8

Bizarrotrip

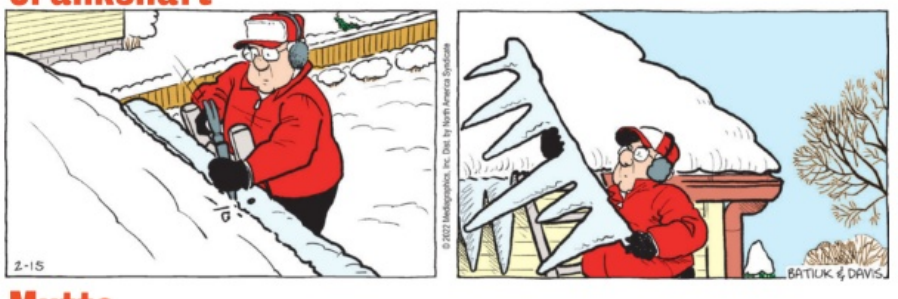
Diamond Lil

THANK YOU FOR THE "I LOVE YOU" TEXT TODAY
THAT'S JUST THE ROMANTIC IN ME
I COULD HAVE DONE WITHOUT THE POOP EMOJI
THAT'S JUST THE ME IN ME
www.creators.com

Hart of the city

I THINK HEART IS MAD AT ME!
SHE HAD A GREAT IDEA FOR A FANFICTION, I FLESHED IT OUT AND PUT IT UP UNDER HER NAME!
WOW, HEART WRITES FANFICTION NOW? I DIDN'T THINK SHE EVEN KNEW WHAT IT WAS.

Crankshaft



Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Blessings from elders will give you confidence. Follow your intuition before taking any initiatives at work. This will help gain more in terms of finances. You may visit a religious place with your family. Control your arrogance to enjoy your domestic life. Students can expect good results with the help of destiny.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Before noon, you may feel happy and enjoy work, but afternoon onwards, negative feelings will bring you down. This will effect your professional life. You can expect arguments on the domestic front. Avoid lending money to any one; it may not be not recovered easily. You will analyse yourself and figure out your negative characteristics. Occult sciences will attract you.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
You are blessed by the moon and will enjoy the day. You will be more romantic too. This will bring harmony in your domestic life. Patience will help you to do your best professionally. You will enjoy coordination with your colleagues and business partners.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You will be successful in controlling worthless expenditure and will boost your bank balance. Be careful about your kids' health. Singles will make unexpected progress in terms of marriage. Be careful about stomach issues.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Your plans will not work well on the professional front. Avoid making important decisions in terms of investments and relationships. Couples and love birds must avoid arguments to maintain harmony in their relationships. Students must not choose shortcuts in studies.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
The moon will make you more sensitive and emotional. Avoid investing in real estate or other assets. Take care of your parents' health. You may expect delay in your projects; face it with patience. On the professional front, don't be indecisive.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
You will be able to maintain a balance between your earnings and expenditures to boost your finances. Your network will help you to implement your plans. Your siblings and juniors will be more helpful. Plan to visit elders or a religious place.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, your energy levels will be high and you will be happy and optimistic about fulfilling your desires with hard work. You will plan to go on outings with friends and family to share your happiness. Students will receive good news.

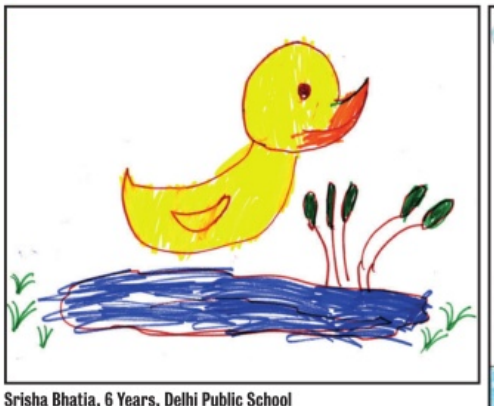
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Until late afternoon, you may feel unhappy and nervous. But after noon onwards, you will be more happy. Your internal vitality will boost your confidence. Avoid carelessness while making decisions regarding finances or your profession and studies. Sometimes you may face self respect-related issues with your spouse. Be patient to avoid converting happy moments into bad ones. Love birds may plan short trips.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Your tendency to overspend will affect your savings. Be careful while expressing yourself at work or on the domestic front. Avoid lending money. Postpone important decisions regarding real estate and other assets. Avoid the tendency to ignore your responsibilities.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
You will re-establish your network. This will give you benefits in the near future. Student will perform better in terms of studies. Love birds will enjoy happy moments.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today will be a busy for you in terms of work; an overload may tire you but you will enjoy work. You will not spend money on worthless stuff. You will be more polite to your family, friends and loved ones. You may also get good news from family members.

KIDZONE



Srisha Bhatia, 6 Years, Delhi Public School

Chandan M, Suman's Convent

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No.4, KSCCF Compound, Pampa Maha Kavi Road, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru 560 018; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
In one day it shows 120 minutes or 2 hours faster. In six days it will shows 12 hours .In this moment it will show the exact time as before.

BULL'S EYE
flue, flute, fuel, fuse, lust, lute, suet, ZESTFUL

FAST FIVE

S	T	A	P	H
C	R	U	R	A
R	I	G	I	D
A	B	U	S	E
P	E	R	M	S

STRIKE OUT

D	I	V	E	R	G	E	S		F	R	E	D		
R	A		O		V	A	G	U	E		E			
O	B	S	C	U	R	E	S		N	I	T	S		
V		E		E	N		E	G	G		E			
E	L	S	E		L	E	O	M	I	N	O	R		
A		O		D		B		E	S	T				
R	E	V	U	P		V	E	R	D	I				
T	D	P	G	I		D		E						
E	Y	E	S	H	A	D	E		D	I	R	E		
A		R	U	T		E		E	B	I				
B	A	G	S		B	A	B	B	L	I	N	G		
A		N	A	B	A	L		R		Z		H		
G	L	E	N		A	S	S	O	N	A	N	T		

QUICK

L	E	A	P	Y	E	A	R		E	D	E	N		
O		D		M		A		I		O				
O	X	E	N		I	M	M	E	R	S	E	S		
K		P		T		S		T		E				
I	N	T	E	N	S	E		U	S	U	R	Y		
	N		E		S		R							
G	U	S	H	E	S		C	U	B	B	O	N		
	O		D		A				A					
D	A	L	L	Y		D	E	L	U	D	E	S		
E		O		K		M		R		C				
C	O	M	P	L	E	T	E		M	A	L	E		
	N		E		R									
Y	A	N	K		B	U	D	A	P	E	S	T		

MENSA PUZZLE
AG, BF, CH, DE.

QUOTE UNCODE
It is better to sleep on things beforehand than lie awake about them afterwards.

RIDDLER
Zebra, the only non-ruminant

SUDOKU

3	8	6	9	4	5	2	7	1
5	9	2	1	3	7	8	4	6
4	7	1	6	8	2	9	3	5
1	4	7	3	5	9	6	2	8
9	1	5	7	6	4	3	8	2
2	6	3	4	1	8	5	9	7
8	5	9	2	7	6	4	1	3
6	3	4	8	2	1	7	5	9
7	2	8	5	9	3	1	6	4

GO FIGURE
Easy
3 + 5 − 2 + 8 = 14
Medium
8 + 7 × 2 − 4 = 26
Hard
7 − 5 × 3 − 2 = 4

ALPHA TRIANGLE
I, LI, Lie, Leis, Isles, Slices, Chisels.

LOOP

KAKURO

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BUNGE

Fiona™
Refined Sunflower Oil

Fiona
Refined Sunflower Oil
Shield for your Nutritious meal.

Ensures upto 50% higher vitamins transfer from the oil to your food*.

VITO PROTECT

UPTO **50%** HIGHER VITAMINS TRANSFER TO YOUR FOOD*

*Based on an independent study conducted at a FSSAI accredited lab (September 2019), under standard test conditions in deep fried fryums upto 3 frying cycles, against an oil which does not contain DMPS. Results mayvary depending on frying conditions and food fried. I *Vitamins added - Vitamin A, D, K and Natural Vitamin E.